Landscaping

LANDSCAPING IS DESIGNED TO CREATE an appropriate setting for the monument signs and to announce arrival and transition through the intensity and pattern of plant materials. Landscaping will extend from one to three blocks along the street to allow motorists and pedestrians to move through the gateway elements, further signifying arrival and transition.

An important objective of the landscape design is to slow traffic entering the city at high speed arterials, or near freeway offramps, and to make people aware that they are transitioning into a defined community. The landscape elements can achieve this by increasing the visual complexity of the right-of-way, which compels drivers to proceed with more caution and take more notice of the environmental context.

Generally the landscaping relies on the use of trees as tall elements, and shrubs and/or groundcover as low elements to set up the gateway sign and contribute to the overall image. Trees will generally be used in both the side (right-of-way) and median areas whenever there is adequate plantable width. On the sides, the trees will contribute to the sense of transition and threshold, and ultimately will create a partial canopy that will serve to narrow the perceived width of the street in contrast to the freeway and wide arterial context at or near most gateways. In the median, the trees will be used as a dramatic backdrop to the sign element, and to further narrow the perceived width of the street.

The landscaping elements will create visual complexity, as noted above, and will also provide a dramatic lead-up to and backdrop for the sign element described in the next chapter. Visual complexity can be accomplished in a number of ways, including the choice of materials and their pattern of application.

One way to increase complexity is to create alternating bands of two or more different forms, colors, or textures of plants with the banding set perpendicular to the direction of travel. Such banding will have the effect of a visual rumble strip on drivers. Another approach is to visually push or pull the driver's cone of vision across the right-of-way laterally with arcs or bands of different plantings that are generally diagonal to the direction of travel. A final approach is to plant an extensive area with a grid or repeating pattern of plants that visually envelops the roadway and provides a continuous rhythm that might help slow traffic. This approach would be most effectively achieved with trees.

Shrubs and groundcover will be used primarily to provide a dramatic foreground to the sign. By working with color, height, and texture in the area preceding the sign, the eye will be drawn to this area, increasing the visibility of the sign in the vehicular context.

The following pages discuss landscape elements in more detail.

Trees

TREES ARE USED AS THE MOST OBVIOUS landscape element. Trees will be used in the medians and sides wherever adequate width exists. Wherever the right-of-way is narrow, the City should work with the adjoining property owners to coordinate plantings on their properties or to acquire easements that will allow additional plantings that will be consistent with and will enhance the gateway treatment.

Trees will be planted as densely as possible for a maximum effect. This massing of trees will provide a strong architectural or sculptural quality, further adding organization and clarity to the otherwise wide and ill-defined gateway locations. Where adequate width exists in median or on the sides to plant trees in pairs or more, this pattern will make it possible to evoke the historic orchards of the valley.

The trees are massed in groupings, paired wherever possible to create a dense canopy and repeating pattern of trunks and crowns. When the usable median is narrow, selected tree species must have a narrow spread to avoid conflict with passing trucks. The tree species chosen for each gateway site must also be different from the existing trees in the vicinity so that they stand out and call attention to the gateway and the sign.

Tree selection is predicated on several design opportunities:

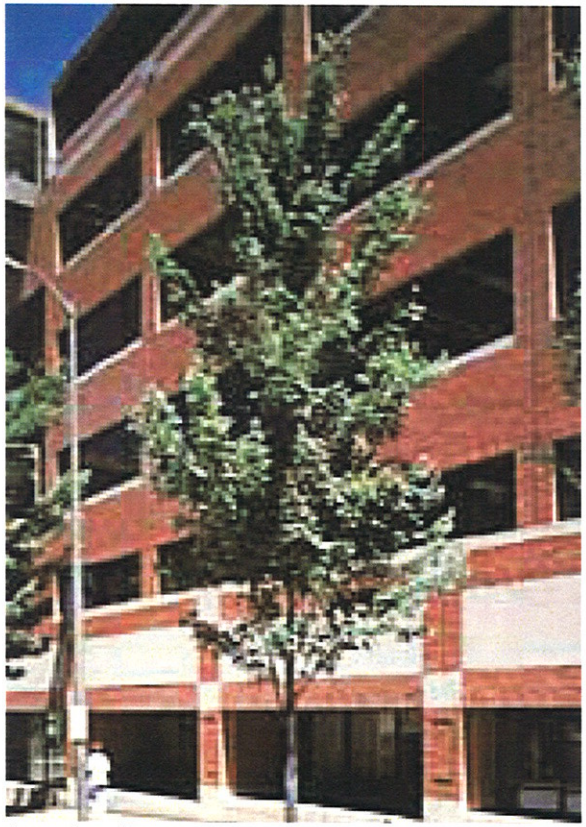
- Provide seasonal color or distinctive foliage
- Demonstrate a strong and memorable form and shape, and an appropriate backdrop to the sign element

Selection must also meet important functional and maintenance goals:

- Avoid conflict with the vehicular right-of-way and in particular passing trucks
- Not conflict with vehicular sight-lines
- Not uplift pavement
- Be resistant to pests and disease
- Easily maintainable

Examples of appropriate trees include the following:

Botanical Name	Common Name
Acer rubrum 'Armstrong'	Armstrong Maple
Carpinus betulus 'festigiata'	European Hornbeam
Crataegus phaenopyrum	Washington Hawthorn
Cupressus sempervirens 'glauca'	Italian Cypress
Malus 'Snowdrift'	Crabapple
Prunus cerasifera	Purple-leaf Plum
Prunus serrulata	Flowering Cherry
Pyrus calleryana	Flowering Pear



Acer rubrum 'Armstrong'

Carpinus betulus 'festigiata'

Carpinus betulus fall color

Crataegus phaenopyrum

Crataegus phaenopyrum

Cupressus sempervirens

Malus 'snowdrift'

Pyrus calleryana

Prunus serrulata

Pyrus calleryana

Robinia ambigua 'Idahoensis'

Shrubs and Groundcovers

IN MEDIAN AREAS shrubs or groundcovers and paving materials are used to complement other landscape elements and to further strengthen the gateway statement. These low scale elements are used in the median areas leading up to the gateway sign to assure that the sign will be visible and will have a dramatic and interesting setting.

Banding Concept:

Small scale planting elements can be placed in a variety of configurations, but the general design intent is to provide an orderly, architectural organization of materials that has a sense of movement and transition. Thus plantings can be in bands or a grid, but would not be arranged in an informal way. Two or more shrub or groundcover species should be used for each location. Species with dramatically different physical characteristics should be juxtaposed to create contrast between the bands and cumulatively help the bands read as a strong alternating pattern. The physical characteristics of selected species should vary in color, form, or texture. For example, Fortnight Lily (*Dietes vegeta*) could be combined with Coyote Brush (*Baccharis pilularis*), where Fortnight Lily would be a flowering foreground plant with vertical, architectural form while Coyote Brush would serve as a background plant with less dramatic color and a more prostrate form. Other combinations might include: Rosemary 'Tuscan Blue', an open vertical form with gazania ground cover; and Cistus x purpureus (Orchid rockrose), a rounded graygreen shrub combined with Ceanothus griseus horizontalis (California Lilac), a prostrate dark emerald green shrub.

Criteria for plant selection include:

- Low maintenance
- Heat and pollution resistant
- Flowering or with interesting color or texture
- Low water requirements

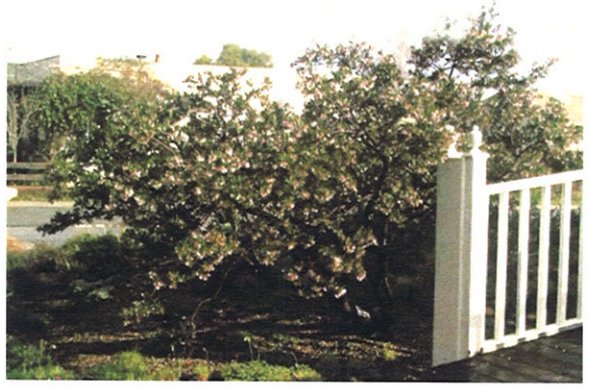
Candidate shrubs and groundcovers include:

Botanical Name	Common Name
Agapanthus spp.	Lily of the Nile
Arctostaphylos spp.	Manzanita
Artemisia californica	California Sagebrush
Baccharis pilularis 'Twin Peaks'	Coyote Brush
Ceanothus griseus horizontalis	California Lilac
Cistus spp.	Rockrose
Collistemon viminales	Little John
Cotoneaster congesta 'Likiang'	Likiang Cotoneaster
Dietes vegeta	Fortnight Lily
Gazania species	Gazania
Hypericum calycinum	Creeping St. John's Wart
Juniperus chinensis 'Parsonii'	Prostrate Juniper
Juniperus virginiana 'Silver Spreader'	Juniper
Lantana montevidensis	Lantana
Liriope muscari 'Big Blue'	Big Blue Lilyturf
Pennisetum alopercuroides	Fountain Grass
Phormium tenax	Flax
Plumbago auriculata	Cape Plumbago
Punica granatum 'Chico'	Dwarf Pomegranate
Rosmarinus officinalis 'Tuscan Blue'	Rosemary
Salvia leaucantha	Mexican Bush Sage
Sollya heterophylla	Australian Bluebells
Verbena tenuisecta	Moss Verbena
Vinca minor 'Bowles'	Dwarf Periwinkle

Agapanthus 'silverstreak'

Agapanthus 'snowcloud'

Agapantus 'stormcloud'



Arctostaphylos Manzanita

Artemesia californica

Baccharis 'twin peaks'

Ceanothus griseus horizonta

Cistus

Collistemon 'little john'

Cotoneaster congestus

Dietes vegeta

Gazania yellow

Hypericum flower

Juniperus chinensis

Juniperus virginiana 'silver spreader'

Lantana

Liriope muscari

Pennisetum alopercuriodes

Phormium green

Plumbago auriculata

Pulica granatum 'chico'

Rosemarinus 'tuscan blue'

Salvia leucantha

Sollya heterophylla flowers

Sollya heterophylla

Verbena pulchella gracilior

Vinca minor variegata

Paving

In certain median areas there will be insufficient width to allow planting. In these areas paving will be used to create the same banding concept as the plantings: regular, rhythmic patterns that convey a sense of movement and transition.

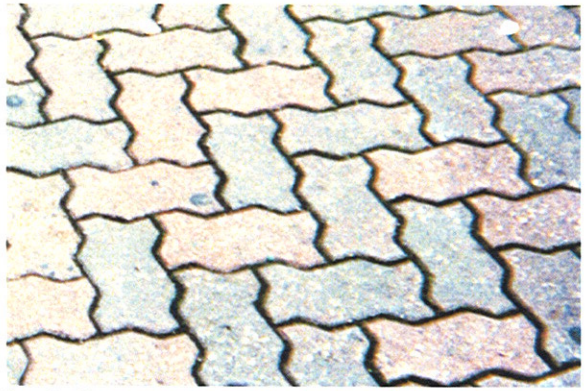
Paving materials may include:

- River rock
- Granite pavers
- Concrete unit pavers

Avoid the use of stamped concrete.

paving cobbles

paving stones



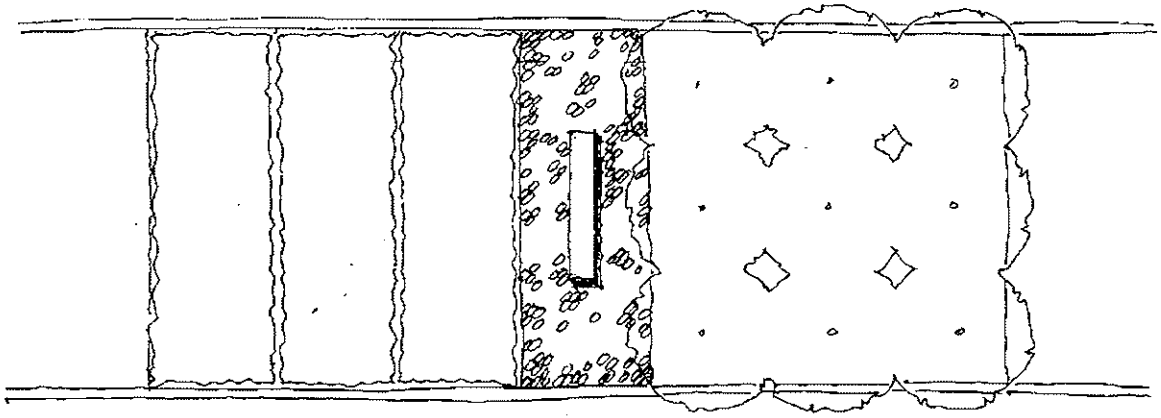
interlocking pavers

flagstone

river rock

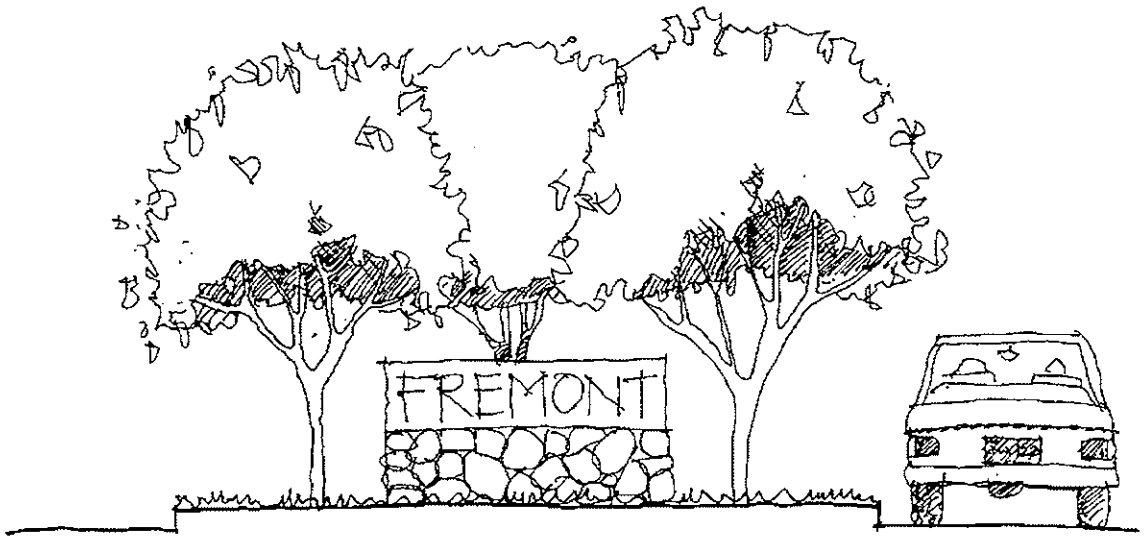
Prototype Landscape Layouts

THE DIAGRAMS THAT FOLLOW illustrate ways that the landscape design concept can be varied, depending on site conditions, that will result in similar general treatments but allow some variety in specific plant and other materials.

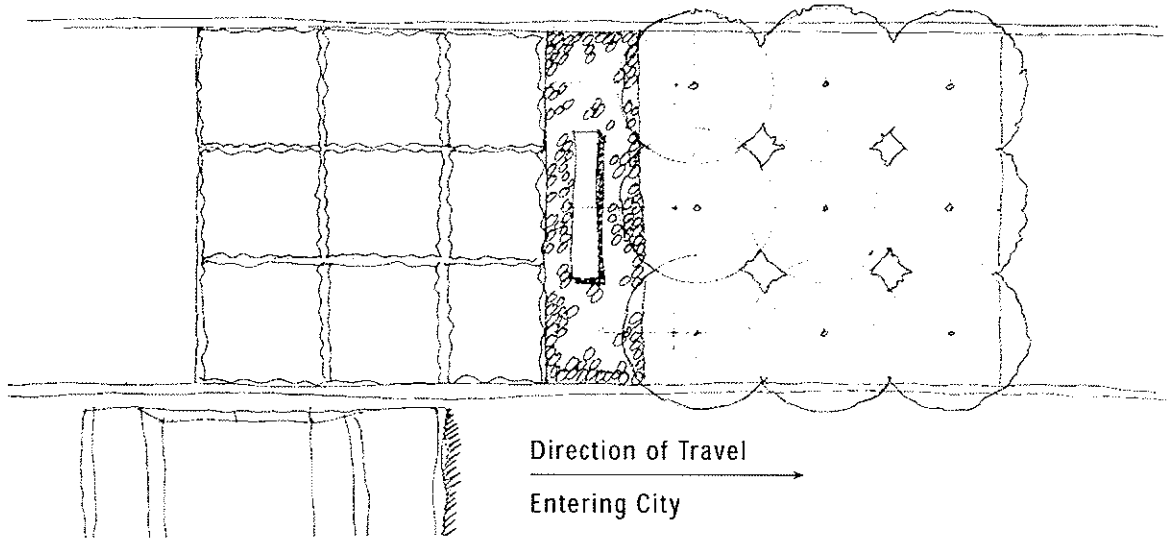


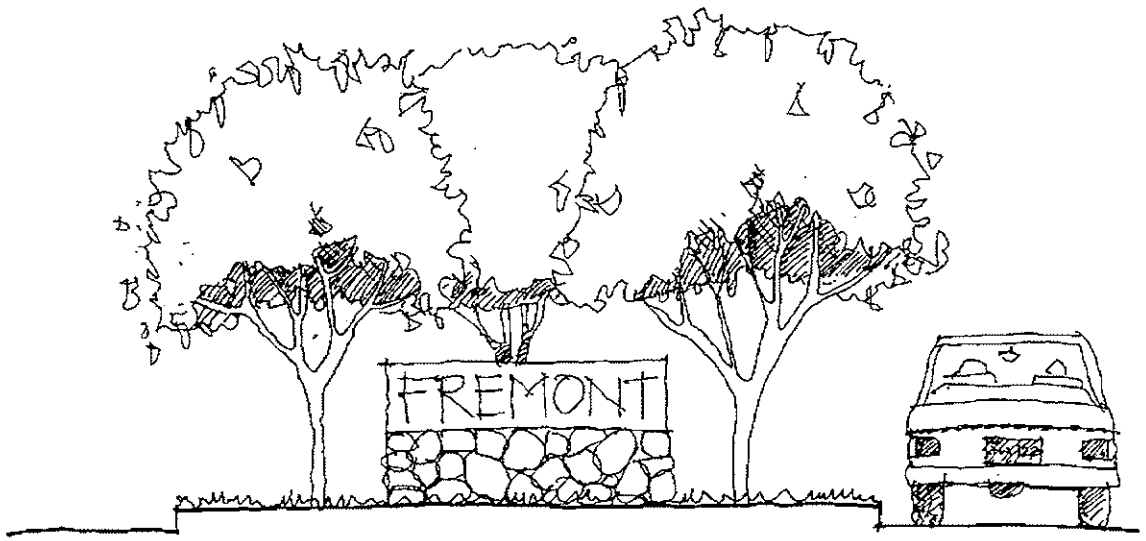
Direction of Travel

Entering City

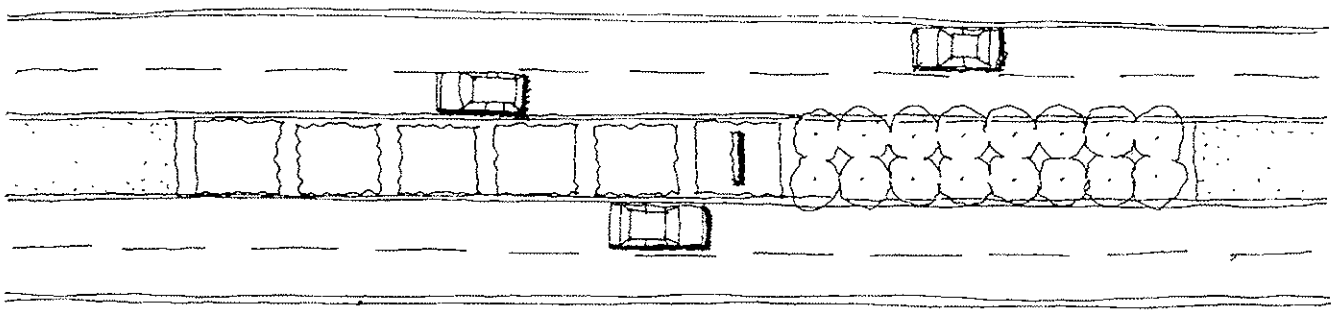


Prototype Landscape Layout 1





Prototype Landscape Layout 2



Direction of Travel

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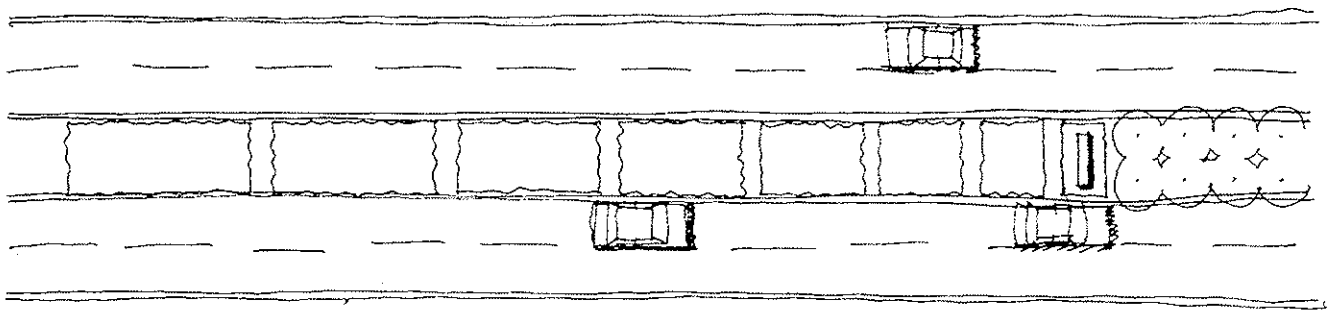
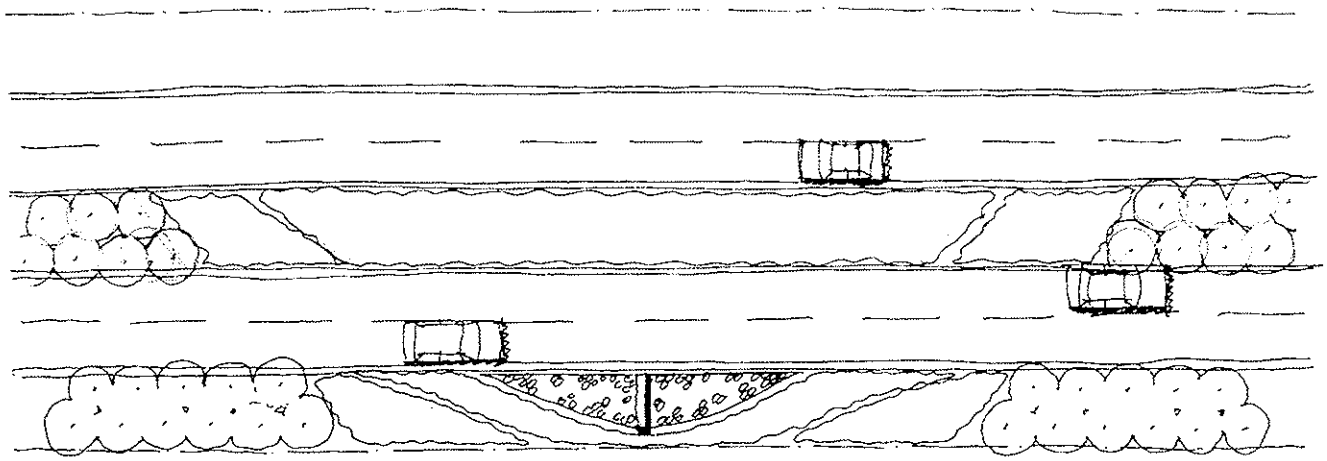
Plan 1



Direction of Travel

Entering City

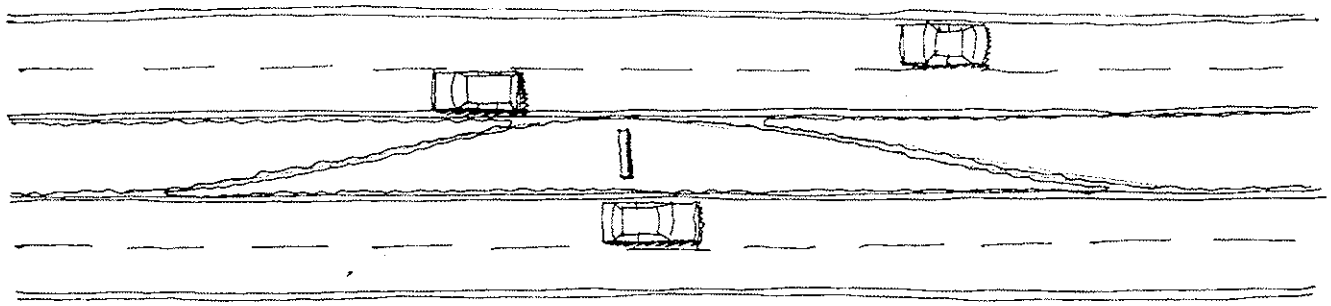
Plan 2



Direction of Travel →

Entering City

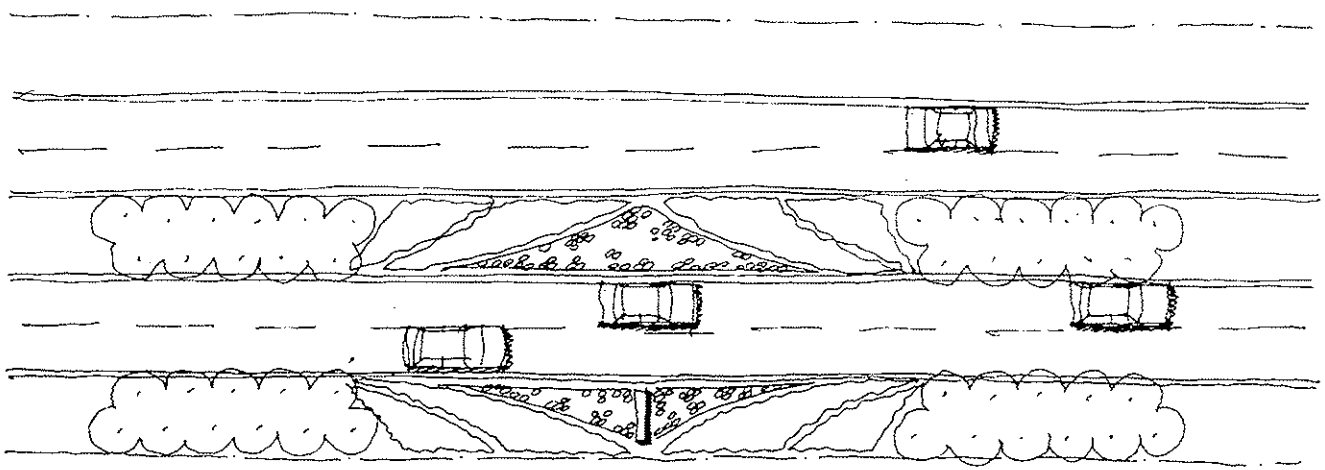
Plan 3



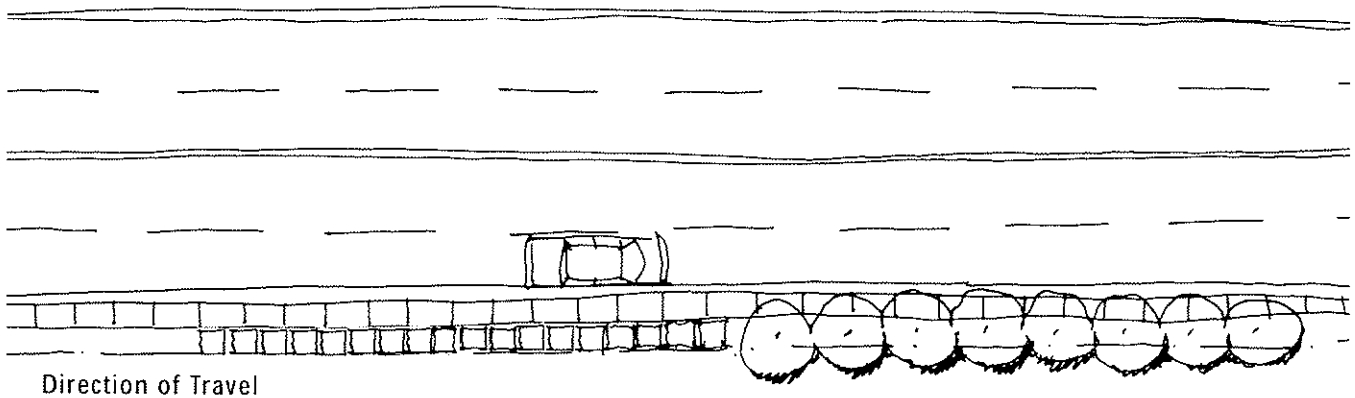
Direction of Travel →

Entering City

Plan 4


Direction of Travel
Entering City

Plan 5


Direction of Travel
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Plan 6

Prototype Gateway Designs

Two gateways were selected for detailed concept design to test application of the design concepts and to develop order-of-magnitude cost estimates. The two gateways were Decoto Road east of I-880 and Mowry Avenue east of I-880.

Decoto Road

The Decoto Road gateway consists of a single median approximately 1,000 feet long and 10-foot wide sidewalk area rights-of-way on either side.

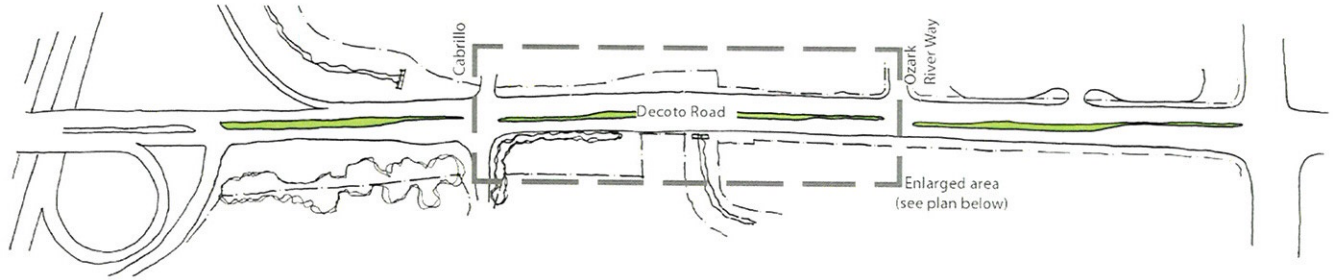
The gateway design highlights the sign location with a patterned ground plane landscape of grasses and flowering perennials leading up to the sign. Immediately following the five foot tall and six foot wide sign are four rows of formally arranged trees. At night the sign will be up-lighted.

The contrast between the low foreground planting in advance of the sign and the forest of trees following the sign will be distinctive and will help draw attention to the sign element, but will not be unduly complicated or distracting.

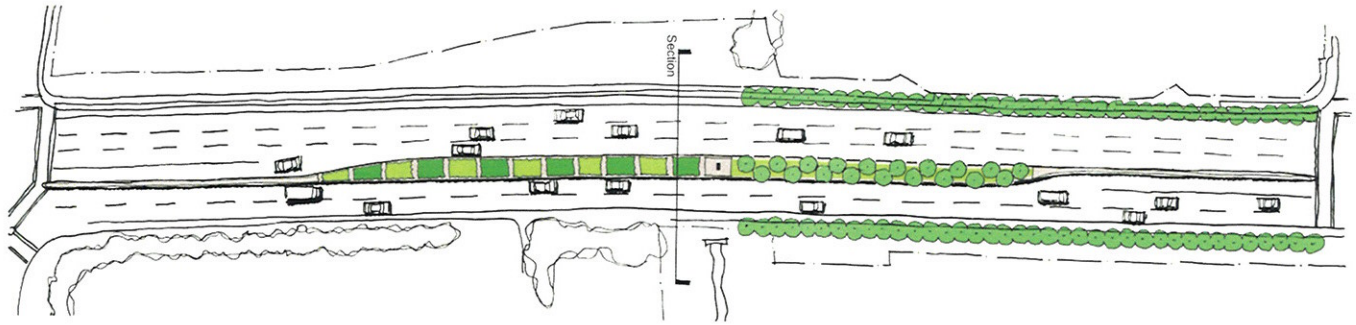
Trees will be of medium size with a high canopy and a formal shape.

Mowry Avenue

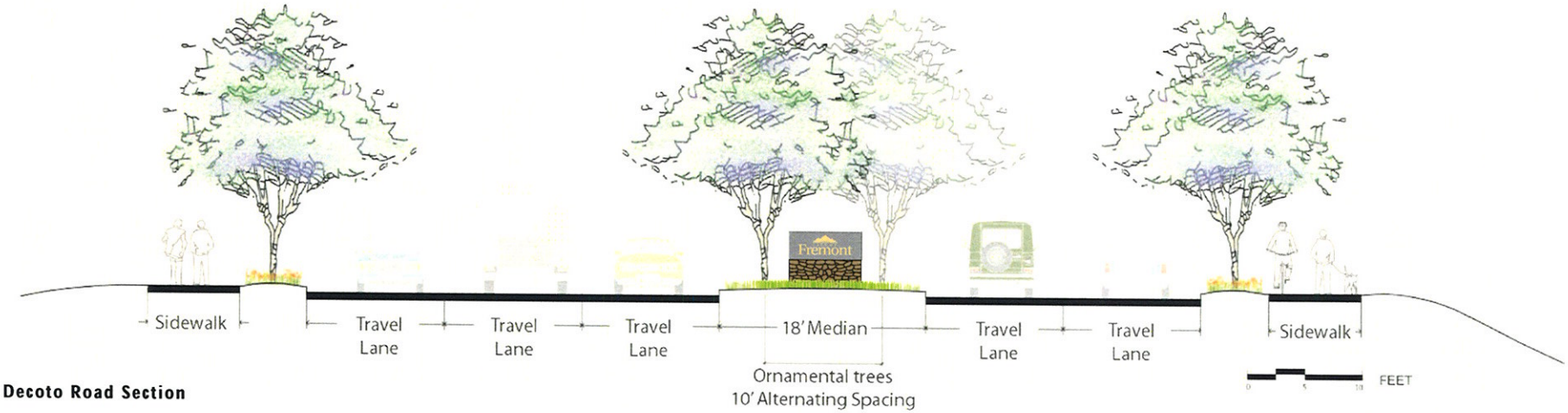
The existing site area consists of an approximately 1,000 foot long median recently landscaped by Caltrans with flowering trees and perennial groundcover. Caltrans right-of-way occupies both sides of the roadway that slopes steeply away from the street curb. The proposal for this gateway is limited to placing an 8-foot tall by 4-foot wide sign in the existing landscaped median. The sign will be located directly before the existing row of trees and will have night lighting. The placement is intended to have the same general pattern as the Decoto condition, but since there is only one row of trees, the overall effect will necessarily be somewhat less dramatic. However, the tall, narrow shape of the sign will be dramatic and will add interest and definition to this location.



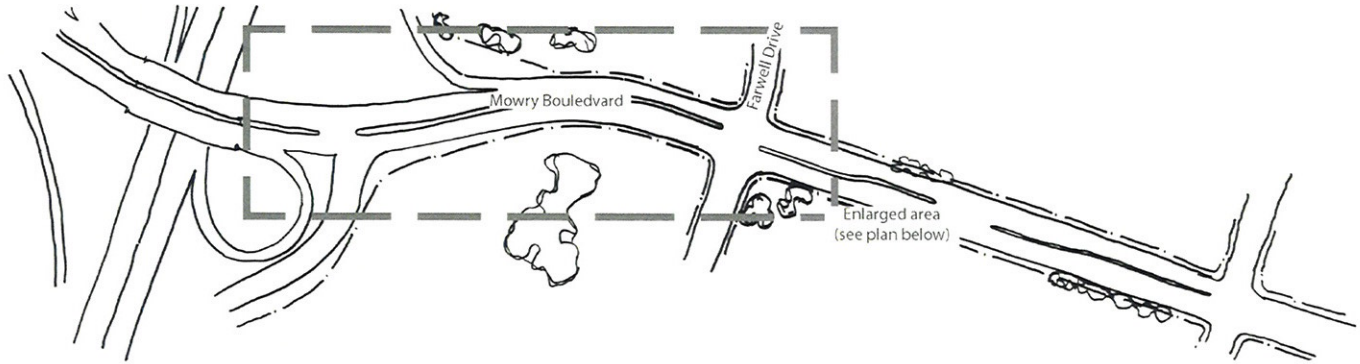
Decoto Road Context



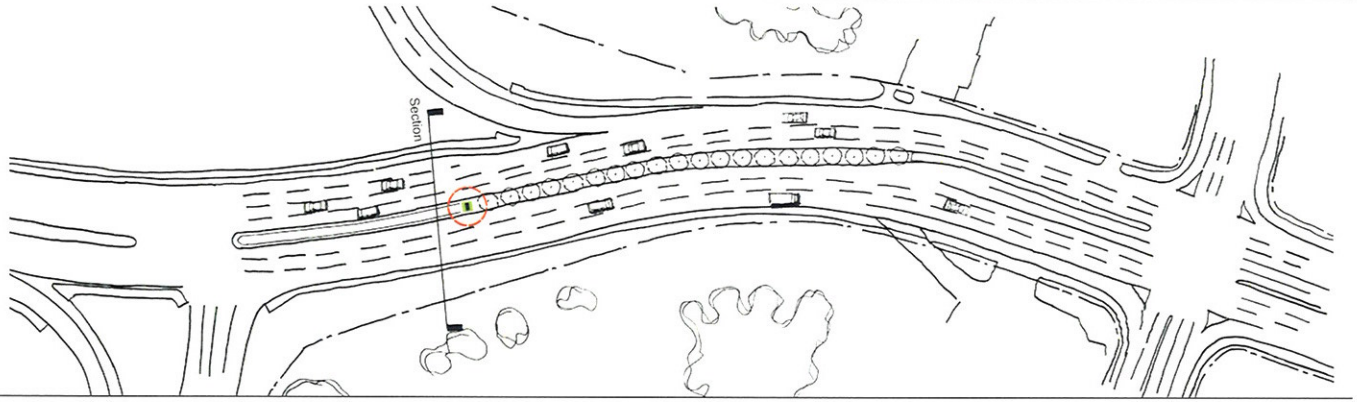
Decoto Road Plan



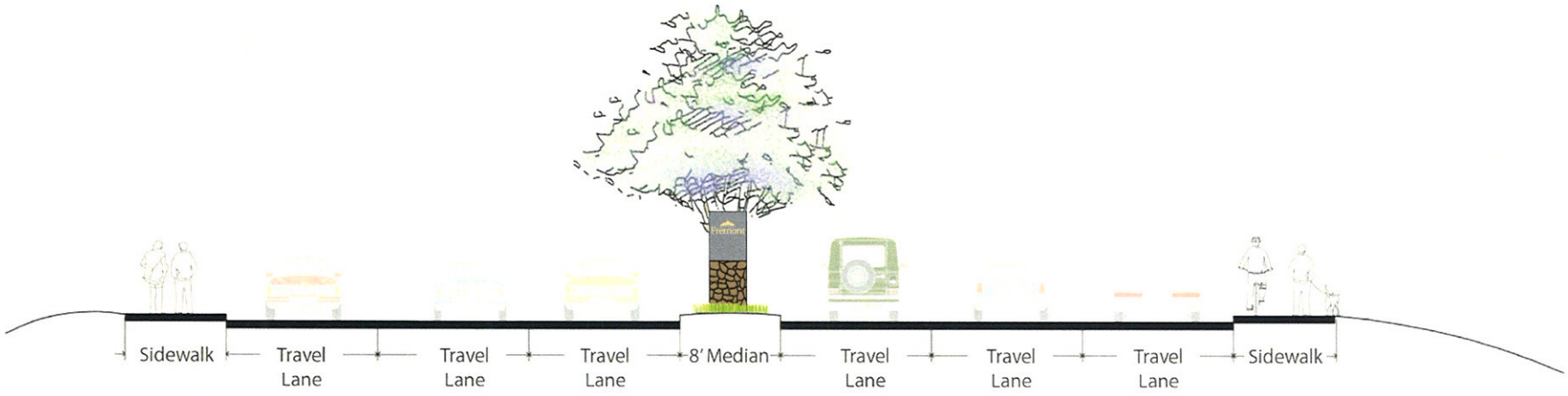
Decoto Road Section



Mowry Avenue Context



Mowry Avenue Plan



Mowry Avenue Section